

Statement by H.E. Mr. Kenichi Suganuma
Ambassador in charge of the 3rd World Conference
on Disaster Risk Reduction
at the 1st Preparatory Committee of WCDRR
(at the session “ considerations on the post-0215 framework for disaster
risk reduction”)

The Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) will be held in March 2015 in Sendai, one of the cities hit by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. As a country that has experienced many disasters such as earthquakes, tsunami, volcanic eruptions, and typhoon, Japan has attached importance to disaster risk reduction in both international cooperation and in its domestic policy. Japan will continue to contribute to the global “mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction” through a variety of consultations towards the WCDRR.

Let me highlight six points that Japan attaches importance to towards HFA2.

The first point is *human security* and the participation of various actors in disaster risk reduction. Under disaster conditions, all people become vulnerable. Those who have special needs such as persons with disabilities, the elderly and children require specific protection in light of their individual situation. It is therefore important to reflect the voices of various actors in the process of formulating DRR plans and reconstruction plans. We have also confirmed the large roles of women in the reconstruction processes from the Great East Japan Earthquake and the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. In order to build a society resilient to disasters, it is necessary to ensure equal opportunities for the leadership and participation of women in decision-making. In disaster risk reduction, it is important to strengthen people-centered efforts to protect and empower individuals and communities. We therefore strongly propose that human security should be placed as a guiding principle of DRR activities.

The second point is the incorporation of DRR into development

agenda. In 2015, not only the HFA2 but also the post-2015 development agenda, a navigator for the whole development sector, will be formulated. While disaster risk reduction is not positioned in the incumbent MDGs, it should be positioned in the post-2015 development agenda in order to promote the mainstreaming of DRR to introduce a DRR perspective in every development plan and to mobilize necessary resources for DRR. For that purpose we should work on the HFA2 and outcomes of WCDRR so that they can input elements of DRR into the post-2015 development agenda. The final targets of the HFA2 should be simple, clear-cut and easy-to-understand if DRR is to be a part of the post-2015 development agenda.

The third point is the structure of the HFA2. The HFA has been established as a reference that contains concrete contents that DRR practitioners should work on on the ground. The HFA2 has to maintain the consistency of DRR activities that has been established through ten years of implementation, and enhance their effectiveness. Therefore, the HFA2 is expected to maintain the basic structure and key activities of the HFA, to avoid introducing new concepts and terms, to revise and reinforce the HFA based on the development of international DRR activities, and to further promote substantial DRR measures of each country's. In concrete, we propose that disaster management cycle in a chronological order, namely prevention, mitigation, preparedness and reconstruction should be considered as the pillars of priorities for actions in the HFA2 in order for the HFA2 structure to be easy-to-understand and user-friendly for DRR practitioners. I would also like to take this opportunity to reconfirm with our colleagues that "The Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World" is still valid.

The fourth point is "build back better." The reconstruction phase is an opportunity to strengthen resilience. Drastic measures such as land use plans and structural measures can be taken after disasters. Countries in the Asian region, being prone to disasters, have practiced "building back better," and this concept should be strongly highlighted.

The fifth point is the importance of investment in disaster risk

reduction and structural measures. The HFA has greatly contributed to steadily developing non-structural DRR activities, including early warning and DRR education, and saving lives of people from disasters. However, structural DRR measures such as investment in disaster risk reduction and infrastructure reinforcement are indispensable to protect achievements of development efforts and realize sustainable development. Investment in disaster risk reduction is not an additional cost but a cost-effective investment. Appropriate combination of structural and non-structural measures will enhance DRR capacity with a synergy effect.

The sixth point is reliable disaster statistics. It is important to establish reliable disaster statistics under the leadership of each country. Reliable disaster statistics is essential for effective DRR measures such as assessing risks, planning effective measures against disasters by learning from past disaster experiences, measuring cost-effectiveness of DRR investment, and securing necessary budget for DRR. Establishment of such reliable disaster statistics is the first step for appropriate and effective DRR.

Japan will cooperate with our colleagues toward the successful WCDRR in March next year and an effective HFA2. Thank you for your kind attention.